

"juice of the plaintain," a member of the banana family. The classic description by Samuel Gee, published in 1888, is fully cited; as, among others, are those of Christian Herter on intestinal infantilism (1908) and of Howland (1921). Haas introduced banana in 1923—a method of treatment still generally employed. The symptoms are considered in great detail, the authors' scheme of treatment is presented and the course and prognosis discussed. At the end their etiologic hypothesis is offered. This hypothesis refers the primary manifestations of the disease to irritants produced in the intestine from polysaccharides in the diet, resulting in increased motility and impaired absorption. The authors believe that the diagnosis can be firmly based on three points: (1) a prolonged, intermittent diarrhea; (2) exclusion of other diseases by means of clinical pathologic tests; and (3) correction of the diarrhea by "carbohydrate-specific diet" and of recurrence of diarrhea by inclusion of carbohydrates other than those found in fruits and vegetables.

It is fair to say that today pediatric opinion has generally accepted the separation of celiac disease and pancreatic fibrocystic disease as distinct entities, the latter distinguished by characteristic pathologic changes, deficiency of pancreatic secretion, and the regular occurrence of pulmonary changes. The authors, however, do not fully accept the distinction. They not only question the diagnostic validity of the test for trypsin in the duodenal contents and of the pulmonary changes as an essential part of the disease but go so far as to say, "... we have come to one very positive conclusion. That is, if cystic fibrosis of the pancreas is treated by the same dietary regimen that is used in celiac disease, the diarrhea will cease, nutrition will become normal, and *if the pulmonary infiltration has not become too severe*," (our italics) "it too will clear up." The proof which they offer of this thesis is far from convincing, consisting of two cases, one of which never showed pulmonary symptoms and the other still having "a chronic cough" after six years. It is interesting to note that in their review of the literature on pathology, nearly all of the abnormalities noted are those of pancreatic cystic fibrosis. One wonders how many of the authors' cases actually belonged to that category and to what extent their discussions and clinical descriptions are vitiated by inclusion of both groups of cases.

The volume must therefore be recommended with reservations. Its bibliography (668 items) and review of the literature are exhaustive and of great reference value. The plan of treatment for celiac disease itself is simple and clearly effective, but its complete applicability to fibrocystic disease may certainly be questioned. Only four lines are devoted to antibiotics, without detail. The material is clearly presented and highly readable, but on the whole the value of the book is restricted by its devotion to a questionable unitarianism and by its minimization of widely accepted contrary views.

There is a brief index.

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**SURGICAL FORUM**—Proceedings of the Forum Sessions, 36th Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons, Boston, Mass., October 1950. By the Surgical Forum Committee. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1951, 665 pages. \$10.00.

This volume is a compilation of the papers presented before the Forum on Fundamental Surgical Problems at the 1950 Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons. It contains 165 articles and abstracts by 393 authors and represents an important cross-section of the surgical research accomplished in 1950. (Unfortunately, some of the forum's most important papers are represented only in abstract.) In general, the authors have prepared papers with rigorous controls and methods, careful selection of data and

concise presentation of results. Surgical physiology receives the greatest attention, with the majority of papers on experimental techniques and principles which will require considerable translation before they are of practical use to the surgeon. This book will be of greatest value to those interested in the investigative aspects of surgery.

The volume is divided into 12 sections representing important specialties and viewpoints in surgery. Lacking appropriate representation are the fields of urologic, orthopedic, and gynecologic surgery. Attempts to improve the results of radical extirpative surgery are reflected by papers on resection of the trachea with replacement of defects by homotransplantation; radical total gastrectomy with replacement of the stomach by a transplanted pouch of right colon; and planned re-explorations of patients whose primary tumors were found at the original resection to have extended to the regional lymph nodes. Cardiac and thoracic surgery have received much attention; cardiac arrest, ventricular fibrillation, cardiac massage, and various techniques for accomplishing extracardiac vascular shunts are prominently discussed.

The attempts to extend neurosurgical ablation in the treatment of non-neoplastic craniocerebral disease are well represented. Several authors explore the use of radioactive iodine and potassium in the localization of intracranial neoplasms. The importance of tracheotomy in the care of craniocerebral trauma is stressed. Recurrence of vasoconstrictor activity after sympathectomy was found to be less when ganglionectomy was performed than when a pre-ganglionic or postganglionic sympathectomy was done. Robertson and Smithwick's late results following lumbar and various forms of dorsal sympathectomy are presented only in abstract.

Authors studied different phases of the homotransplantation problem, using blood vessels, skin, bone, endocrine tissues, and trachea, and different techniques of storage and preservation. The use of intra-arterial transfusions in shock is discounted where adequate prompt venous replacement can be accomplished. The role of the adrenal cortex and of the hepatic and portal "pool" in shock is also discussed. The frequency of carbon dioxide retention under anesthesia is shown by continuous analysis of the expired gases. Curare is implicated in the abolition of appropriate respiratory adjustments to asphyxia, in addition to its peripheral effects. A hypertensive reflex response is elicited by the simple manipulation of the epiglottis during intubation under light anesthesia. Also stressed are the deleterious possibilities of the excessive manipulation of the sympathetic chain during sympathectomy, and the dangers attendant upon the use of ether in sympathectomies for peripheral vascular disease.

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**A STUDY OF EPILEPSY IN ITS CLINICAL, SOCIAL AND GENETIC ASPECTS.** By Carl Henry Alström. Acta Psychiatrica et Neurologica, Supplementum 63. Ejnar Munksgaard, Norregade 6, Copenhagen, 1950.

This monograph is of greater interest to the neurologist than to physicians in general. It gives rather a clear insight into the incidence of the convulsive state in Sweden and the facilities there available for diagnosis and therapy. The first portion of the volume deals in extenso with classification, and quotes various authorities who are in disagreement. The genetic aspect of epilepsy is dealt with at length.

Apparently there has been a law in Sweden since the eighteenth century forbidding marriage of idiopathic epileptics; since in the face of such legislation the incidence of seizures in this country seems quite comparable with that in the world at large, it would seem rather evident that heredity is not an extremely important factor in the etiology of the convulsive states.